

John Weston Jr. House C. 1821

John Weston Jr. was born in 1796 about the time his father was lost at sea. His mother married again in a few years and John grew up in his stepfather's house. When he was about to marry in 1821, he turned to a piece of land, about 8 acres, he had inherited from his father. It was cleared land, part of his ancestors' homestead, just back of his Uncle James's farm on Surplus St., and there he built his house.

John Weston built a Cape with an ell, but in keeping with the prosperous times, he built a modern version. There was a central front door with 2 windows on either side, but those windows do not reach the eaves as did windows in the original Capes. That was a new feature designed to give greater head room to the first floor.

There is no central chimney, dictated by the fact that an old building was made a part of the new house and it already had a kitchen fireplace. So the Westons were able to have a chimney at each end of the house, a very new feature. That allowed fireplaces in both parlors and in 2 chambers, and with no need to wind the stairs around a chimney, there was a plain-styled straight stairway, not at all picturesque, but then a novelty.

The construction is good, consistent with the times, but quite unremarkable. It is the ell that is old, crude and architecturally very fine. The shape and dimensions of that ell, the wide and thick boards and the curious beams, indicate a house far older than the front part, yet it is only an ell joined to a new house.

The main house that John Weston built has many old features worth noting. The kitchen, now a dining room, has 12 doors, probably all but one dating from the time of construction. Those who restore old houses like to find so many old doors in one room,

doors that once led to buttry, pantry, borning room, cellar and stairs, as well as to parlors, halls and outdoors.

Although the house has been occupied all the years since the Westons' day, through a master mariner's family, a wealthy summer resident, and a Duxbury year-round farmer, little was changed for over 100 years. As late as the 1940s there was no furnace, no plumbing and no electricity. Such conveniences have been added, along with another room, without changing the general appearance of the house John Weston Jr. built in 1821. It is now the home of Allen and Joanne Lahey.

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